



ERS EUROPEAN
RESPIRATORY
SOCIETY
every breath counts



ENSP

European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 1049 Brussels
Belgium

Dear Commissioner Georgieva,

On 9th March 2016, the European Parliament voted by a resounding majority for a text in a motion for a resolution that rejects the Philip Morris International (PMI) agreement on illicit trade of tobacco products.

As you well know, the EU-PMI agreement was signed following legal actions from the European Union against PMI for massive criminal activity, including the organisation of contraband and money laundering¹. However, there are major doubts about the effectiveness of this agreement in reducing illicit trade of tobacco products. In addition, the extension of the agreement would be in direct conflict with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which requires all parties, including the EU, to reject any type of agreement with the tobacco industry. The WHO Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products also forbids the EU and other signatory parties to delegate their obligations, especially around tracking and tracing, to the tobacco industry.

The European Respiratory Society (ERS) and the European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention (ENSP) previously called on Members of the European Parliament to support the text that rejects the PMI agreement. We therefore welcome the vote and now urge you to follow this positive step forward. The resolution sends a clear and strong message that European citizens do not want any further collaboration between the EU and PMI. ERS and ENSP very much join MEPs, and request you to focus on implementing the 2014 EU Tobacco Directive, rather than renewing any deal with the tobacco industry to combat cigarette smuggling and illicit trade.

Prof. Carlos Jimenez-Ruiz

Chair of the ERS Tobacco Control Committee

Dr. Francisco Rodriguez Lozano

ENSP President

¹ 1 US District Court. European Community complaint against Philip Morris, RJ Reynolds and Japan Tobacco. New York: United States District Court, Eastern District of New York 2000, <http://www.nsr-adnf.ca/cms/file/files/pdf/euclaim.pdf>